

Before
The Public Service Commission of
South Carolina
Docket No.: 2011-53-T

In Re: Application of)
Ready Set Movers, LLC to)
Amend Class E (Household)
Goods) Certificate of)
Public Convenience and)
Necessity,)
Certificate No. 9787)
Telephonic Deposition of)
STEPHEN CARROLL)
August 15, 2012)
_____)

Telephonic Deposition on oral examination of
STEPHEN CARROLL, reported by Brad H. Thomas,
Certified Realtime Reporter and Notary Public in and
for the State of South Carolina; said deposition
taken pursuant to agreement and in accordance with
the South Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure, at the
Offices of Ellis, Lawhorne & Sims, 1501 Main Street,
Columbia, South Carolina, on August 15, 2012, at the
hour of 3:21 p.m.

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Appearances

Representing the Applicant:

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1	CONTENTS	
2	Deposition of STEPHEN CARROLL	
3		Page
4	Stipulations	4
5	Examination by Mr. Pringle	4
6	Examination by Mr. Nelson	11
7	Certificate of Reporter	16

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1 This deposition is taken in
2 accordance with the South Carolina Rules of Civil
3 Procedure.

4 It is agreed and stipulated by the
5 Deponent and respective counsel that the reading and
6 signing of the deposition by the Deponent is
7 expressly waived.

8 WHEREUPON:

9 STEPHEN CARROLL, being duly sworn and
10 cautioned to speak the truth, the whole truth and
11 nothing but the truth, testifies as follows:

12 EXAMINATION

13 BY MR. PRINGLE:

14 **Q. Just by way of introduction since we're on**
15 **the record, this is a deposition that's taking place**
16 **in South Carolina Public Service Commission Docket**
17 **No. 2011-53-T. It's a shipper witness deposition in**
18 **connection with the application of Ready Set Movers**
19 **for a -- seeking an amended certificate of public**
20 **convenience and necessity to transport household**
21 **goods from points and places in South Carolina to**
22 **points and places in South Carolina.**

23 **With me -- my name is Jack Pringle. I'm**
24 **an attorney with Ellis, Lawhorne & Sims, and I am**
25 **the attorney for the applicant Ready Set Movers.**

1 With me here in Columbia is Jeff Nelson, who is an
2 attorney for the South Carolina Office of Regulatory
3 Staff.

4 With those introductory things out of the
5 way, let me just ask you to state your full name and
6 business address for the record.

7 A. Stephen Carroll. My business address,
8 1821 Ridge Bush Lane, Johns Island, South Carolina.
9 That's in Charleston County.

10 Q. Okay. What do you do for a living,
11 Mr. Carroll?

12 A. I am in residential real estate.

13 Q. Okay. Who is your employer for purposes
14 of your residential real estate job or profession?

15 A. I work under the real estate company of
16 Blanchard & Calhoun in Charleston.

17 Q. Okay. And tell me a little bit about that
18 company.

19 A. That company is an asset management
20 company that purchases neighborhoods and revitalizes
21 the neighborhood, recapitalizes the HOA, and then
22 resells the mostly town homes that we have to --
23 back to owner occupants.

24 Q. Okay. Tell me a little bit about your
25 background and experience in residential real estate

1 to date.

2 A. This is my 12th year in real estate sales.
3 I have done everything from site sales with
4 development companies over the last ten years now,
5 general brokerage real estate sales my first two
6 years in the real estate business. Have probably
7 sold over 500 homes in the last 12 years anywhere
8 from the upstate of South Carolina to Charleston,
9 South Carolina.

10 Q. Okay. And you mentioned a little bit
11 about this, that your experience has involved
12 anywhere from the upstate of South Carolina to the
13 Charleston area. Where do you focus your efforts
14 generally in terms of helping people buy and sell
15 houses?

16 A. Charleston is where my focus is. I have
17 four different properties that I'm actually involved
18 with. Charleston tends to be a destination
19 location. And the product we sell, town homes and
20 condos, tend to be a lot of out of state people. So
21 it's actually a very transient and/or second home or
22 people moving from out of the area to Charleston.
23 That's sort of the focus that I am involved with.

24 Q. Okay. You mentioned people from moving
25 out of state. Does your -- do you also get involved

1 in assisting people that are moving within the state
2 of South Carolina?

3 A. Charleston has, I think, six different
4 colleges, state colleges. And probably over half of
5 our properties are from individuals that are in
6 state, either a lot of Greenville, Columbia people
7 that actually buy a town home for a child or
8 themselves as a second home and/or a location for
9 their children while they are in school.

10 Q. Okay. Based upon your -- have all the 12
11 years that you've had in real estate sales been
12 within the state of South Carolina?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Okay. Based upon your 12 years of real
15 estate sales experience in South Carolina as well as
16 the other things that you've described to me, have
17 you had occasion to observe and become knowledgeable
18 about what I'll call the household goods moving
19 market, meaning how much people are moving around
20 South Carolina?

21 A. Yes. Probably in my career in Charleston
22 probably 30 percent of my sales have been for people
23 outside of Charleston, but still in South Carolina.

24 Q. Okay.

25 A. It's, I think, listed -- with Charleston

1 being a resort town and also several colleges it
2 lends itself to state supported purchasers that buy
3 and stay within South Carolina.

4 Q. Okay. And you mentioned that you've
5 helped folks who may have moved from Greenville?

6 A. Greenville. I've specifically had
7 probably three customers in the last six months that
8 have moved from Greenville.

9 Q. Okay. Have you had any from other
10 locations in the upstate that you recall?
11 Spartanburg, for example?

12 A. Spartanburg, yes, and Columbia recently.

13 Q. Okay. Any that you recall from other
14 parts of the state, say, for example, the Pee Dee or
15 the Rock Hill area?

16 A. Lancaster County specifically, Aiken
17 County.

18 Q. Okay.

19 A. And also Florence actually.

20 Q. Okay. Aiken, Lancaster, Florence. Okay.
21 In your capacity in real estate sales do you ever
22 have occasion to interface with or to refer actual
23 household goods movers to the people you help?

24 A. Yes. Almost everybody asks if we have
25 somebody we know or somebody that we use to help

1 move here locally and/or across the state.

2 Q. Okay. And have you -- just I'll go
3 ahead -- have you worked with Ready Set Movers in
4 any capacity?

5 A. Yes, I have worked with Ready Set Movers.

6 Q. Okay. What has your -- what has your
7 experience with them -- with that company been?
8 What has your experience been?

9 A. They've actually done an impeccable job.
10 Every customer we've referred to them has spoken
11 their praises and have referred them additional
12 business as well.

13 Q. Okay. If Ready Set Movers obtains
14 statewide authority, meaning the ability to move all
15 over the state or, you know, to originate and
16 terminate moves within the state, originate moves
17 that start within the state and then finish within
18 the state, would you anticipate referring business,
19 those types of moves, to Ready Set Movers?

20 A. Yes. Yes. We actually had -- I've
21 already referred some of that business that they
22 have had to actually turn down because they couldn't
23 do it.

24 Q. Okay. Okay. Going a little further,
25 having been in the business for 12 years are you in

1 a position to assess or give an idea of what demand
2 for household goods moves is currently as compared
3 to sometime in the past?

4 A. Charleston right now probably in the last
5 six months has really taken off real estate-wise.
6 Our inventory is way down. I've personally sold
7 almost 40 units this year already. And we're sort
8 of seeing a -- I'd say Charleston is experiencing a
9 turnaround at this point and it's a hard climb right
10 now. And I haven't seen that -- I haven't sold that
11 many units in a six or eight month period of time in
12 the last 12 years at all.

13 Q. Okay. Well, based upon that and your
14 other, you know, knowledge and experience in this
15 area, do you believe that the market could support
16 another household goods moving company that has the
17 statewide authority that I've described?

18 A. I do believe so.

19 Q. Okay. And as you already mentioned, you
20 would anticipate referring some of those intrastate
21 moves to Ready Set Movers?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Are you in the position also to -- or your
24 company to also -- you know, to perhaps influence
25 other agents or real estate professionals' decisions

1 with respect to referrals?

2 A. Yes. I was a sales manager at two other
3 companies that I worked for and I still am in
4 communication with a lot of the agents that worked
5 for me. And they all pretty much still use the same
6 referral companies that I use. And I've already
7 referred Ready Set Movers to them in the past
8 already.

9 Q. Okay. All right. Is there anything else
10 that you would like to add?

11 A. I know that this group is a professional
12 group and that they do a great job and I think that
13 if they have this opportunity, they'll do well at
14 it.

15 MR. PRINGLE: Okay. Well, thanks.
16 Please answer any questions that Mr. Nelson may
17 have.

18 THE WITNESS: Sure.

19 EXAMINATION

20 BY MR. NELSON:

21 Q. And, Mr. Carroll, I just -- I'm going to
22 have just a couple questions for you since
23 Mr. Pringle appears to have covered most of my list
24 already.

25 Does your company offer any type of

1 relocation services? Is that part of the package or
2 whatever you offer people that come in to buy a home
3 from you?

4 A. It depends on the customer. We do handle
5 some relocations. Every customer is a little
6 different. It's depending on their needs, but we do
7 do that.

8 Q. Could you give me an example maybe of what
9 you might offer somebody as far as existing them in
10 relocating?

11 A. Anything from their financing, help with
12 utilities and the local markets aspects, whether,
13 you know, schools, transportation, any of that type
14 of stuff, moving services, appraisal services. Any
15 sort of aspect that deals with -- that's a
16 transition or a move to a new house, we pretty much
17 help with all of it.

18 Q. Okay. When you provide this kind of
19 service do you actually choose the mover in that
20 case or do you just recommend somebody to the buyer?

21 A. We specifically choose the moving company
22 due to the fact that we use them for our -- moving
23 our models, licensed and bonded and we've already
24 vetted them and know that if there's any damage,
25 it's covered and if there's any issues, they handle

1 it. We use them specifically and also we try to
2 only recommend the people that we use.

3 Q. Okay. And, I guess, kind of following off
4 what Mr. Pringle had already asked, if given the
5 opportunity then to offer the services for somebody
6 moving within South Carolina, would you recommend
7 Ready Set Movers or would you use them?

8 A. I would, yes.

9 Q. Have you had difficulty -- you've moved,
10 it sounds like, a tremendous amount of units this
11 year already. Have you had a hard time at all
12 finding people or finding a mover in this state that
13 you would like to use in helping people move to
14 Charleston?

15 A. We actually have. A lot of the relocation
16 companies already have moving companies that are
17 already in-house or a part of their package. And we
18 actually have more problems with that type of a
19 situation, which is why we try to recommend Ready
20 Movers because we know their type of business, we
21 know that they are going to take care of our
22 customers.

23 Q. Okay. Do you have anybody else you
24 recommend? Do you have a list of companies that you
25 refer to clients?

1 A. We basically give a -- we will usually
2 give two or three names of customers. And Ready Set
3 Movers is our preferred mover. They do our -- they
4 move our model furniture when we move a model, that
5 type of thing, but there is a list that customers
6 would usually get. Ready Set Movers is the No. 1
7 usually on price point and we vet them and that's
8 who we use.

9 Q. So you've actually -- your company or you
10 personally have used Ready Set Movers then as well?

11 A. Yes.

12 Q. Okay. Do you find the rates to be fair in
13 comparison to other companies in the area as well?

14 A. Very fair. Very overly competitive I
15 would say.

16 Q. That's good. Have you ever heard any
17 complaints of -- any of the clients that you've
18 referred Ready Set Movers to ever made a complaint
19 about their services?

20 A. Not one.

21 MR. NELSON: No further questions.
22 Thank you very much. I appreciate it.

23 MR. PRINGLE: Let me mention -- this
24 is Jack Pringle again. Let me mention one thing to
25 you that I meant to ask at the beginning. You have

1 the ability with respect to this deposition, if you
2 wanted to, to read through it, make sure that it's
3 accurate, and then sign it, or you can waive reading
4 and signing. The decision -- that decision, of
5 course, is up to you. And I just throw that to you.

6 I think typically I'll just say this
7 just -- typically these shipper witness deponents
8 decline, you know, they waive reading and signing
9 because there's not much likelihood that you'll be
10 misquoted in your deposition with respect to what
11 you've said.

12 THE WITNESS: I would probably just
13 waive it.

14 MR. PRINGLE: Okay. All right.
15 That's great. Other than that, I appreciate your
16 time. And we'll get this transcript and submit it
17 in connection with this case. And we appreciate you
18 taking your time out from what sounds to be like a
19 very busy real estate market in Charleston to give
20 this deposition.

21 THE WITNESS: Sounds good.

22 Further Deponent sayeth not.

23 (Whereupon, the taking of the
24 deposition was concluded at 3:39 p.m.)

25

1 Certificate of Reporter
2

3 I, Brad H. Thomas, Certified Realtime
4 Reporter and Notary Public in and for the State of
5 South Carolina, do hereby certify that I reported
6 the deposition of STEPHEN CARROLL on the 15th day of
7 August, 2012; that the witness was first duly sworn
8 by me, and that the foregoing 15 pages constitute a
9 true and correct transcription of the said
10 deposition.

11 I further certify that I am neither
12 attorney nor counsel for, nor related to or employed
13 by, any of the parties connected with this action,
14 nor am I financially interested in said cause.

15 I further certify that the original of
16 said transcript shall be hereafter sealed and
17 delivered to JOHN J. PRINGLE, JR., ESQUIRE, Ellis,
18 Lawhorne & Sims, P.A., 1501 Main Street, Suite 500,
19 Columbia, South Carolina 29202. This sealed
20 original transcript shall be retained by the above
21 party, who shall be responsible for filing same with
22 Court prior to trial or any hearing which might
23 result in a final order on any issue.

24 In witness whereof I set my hand and seal
25 this 16th day of August, 2012.

My Commission
expires 12/12/17

Brad H. Thomas, CRR
and Notary Public for the
State of South Carolina